

LEGO BUILDERS CLUB

PREMIERE
★ ISSUE ★

BRICK KICKS

The Official Magazine of the LEGO® Builders Club

Issue No. 1

Super
Designs
from the LEGO
Masterminds
Page 3



Inside:  

- ★ Tricky Bricks Page 4
- ★ Short Stacks Page 7
- ★ Better Brickmanship Page 8

A Whole Lot More!

TIDBRICKS

Letter from the LEGO® Builders Club President



Dear LEGO Builder:

Greetings! And welcome to the club! It's going to be an exciting, fun-filled year for us all — starting with this first issue of *BRICK KICKS*, the official magazine of the LEGO Builders Club! It's just bursting with great stories, news, games, jokes...and so much more! Plus, it gives us a chance to talk with each other from time to time!

Did you ever wonder how LEGO bricks were invented? You can read all about it in "Bricks & Pieces: The LEGO Story" — right on this page. And, on page three, you will be thrilled by the ideas of LEGO Master Builders, Karsten Kristensen and Francie Berger.

In every issue, you can follow the non-stop adventures of our cartoon hero, Brick Buildmore, along with his pals Bridget and Comet, the dog. Just turn to page six to see their encounter with visitors from Outer Space!

We also have a section just for your LEGO creations, called "Members' Masterpieces." If you have an original model you would like to share, turn to page five to find out how to send in your design. Or, drop me a line any time you have an idea, comment, questions, or suggestions for our magazine. I would love to hear from you!

Remember to tell all your friends about the LEGO Builders Club so they can join in on the fun, too! ■■■

Until the next issue...

Happy building to you,

Susan Williams

Susan Williams
President
LEGO Builders Club

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Bricks & Pieces: The LEGO® Story

Did you know that nearly 300 million children have owned LEGO sets since they were first made? And that you are one of the 68 million kids from around the world who like to play with LEGO® building bricks today? Here's the story of how we grew...



Although the international LEGO Group is now very large, it is still a family-run company that started out quite small. More than 50 years ago, a carpenter named Ole Kirk Christiansen and his 12-year-old son, Godfred, started making toys in the little town of Billund, Denmark. Plastic had not been invented yet, so they made toy cars, trucks, yo-yos, animals, and other toys out of wood. They decided that a good name for their company would be LEGO, which means "play well" in Danish, and also, they discovered, happens to mean "put together" in Latin! Ole and Godfred were very proud of their workmanship, and adopted the LEGO motto that "only the best is good enough."



When plastic became available after World War II, LEGO began to make both wooden and plastic toys. It was about this time that the idea of plastic LEGO bricks was introduced. Godfred loved to build with these colorful new pieces, and was continually putting them together and taking them apart to build new things. In fact, it was Godfred who perfected the special design that makes every single LEGO brick fit together in any combination, over and over again. The first LEGO building set was made more than 30 years ago — and the bricks from that set can still be used with even the newest LEGO building set of today!

LEGO bricks first appeared in the United States in 1961 and quickly became as popular here as in Europe. The international LEGO Group is now worldwide, and is run by Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen, Ole Kirk Christiansen's grandson. As the company keeps growing, so do the kinds of exciting LEGO kits that are now sold in 129 different countries...from DUPLO® preschool sets to FABULAND®, LEGO BASIC to LEGOLAND®, LEGO boats and trains to LEGO TECHNIC SETS. In fact, this year alone, we will make more than six billion bricks and building pieces for all the LEGO lovers 'round the world — like you! ■■■



"Possi-build-ities" with LEGO® Design Masterminds



Karsten Kristensen and Francie Berger probably spend more time playing with LEGO® bricks than anyone else in the country. Luckily for them, that's their job: "You might say we're 'professional kids,'" says 26-year-old Francie with a big grin. "It's a dream come true that we get to build with LEGO bricks all day long," adds 27-year-old Karsten.

Francie, who has collected LEGO bricks since she was three years old, loved to build so much that she went on to study architecture in college. "LEGO bricks even helped me earn my degree," explains Francie. "For my senior project, I designed and built a farm entirely out of LEGO pieces!"

Karsten grew up in Denmark, the country where LEGO toys were first made, and admits that he has been a dedicated LEGO builder since he was a young boy. He and Francie

never imagined that they'd become the Master Builders at LEGO Systems, Inc., the LEGO Group's United States headquarters, located in Enfield, Connecticut. "Our job is to prove to the world that you can build anything with LEGO bricks," says Karsten, smiling, "and we love it!"

Like a band of merry elves, Karsten, Francie, and their helpers work in a shop that's filled with thousands and thousands of LEGO bricks in all sizes, shapes, and colors. There's never a worry that the designers will run out of building materials — most of the LEGO pieces sold in America today are made only 100 yards away from their workshop, in a modern factory that's the size of ten football fields!

Assisted by a crew of seven builders, Karsten and Francie create spectacular models that are put on display in shopping malls, toy stores, and at special LEGO exhibits across the country. Explains Francie, "We want to show just how creative you can be with LEGO bricks. We try to build models that look as real as possible, or are fantastically new and imaginative." According to Karsten, "we only use bricks from regular LEGO sets, and never cut or change the pieces in any way." In fact, Karsten knows the bricks so well that he can close his eyes, shake a box — and describe what pieces are inside of it!

The LEGO builders use millions of colorful bricks every year to create their amazing models — from cars and creatures to spaceships and cities! Recently, they were busy making a 9-foot-tall dinosaur, and took three months to carefully put together a 14-foot-high and 28-foot-long replica of the U.S. Capi-

tal Building. Other exciting models include designs of the Man on the Moon, zoo animals, giant playing cards, and knights in armor.

Karsten and Francie work hard at their play, and offer LEGO Builders Club members the following advice whenever you want to create a large, detailed LEGO model: "First you should take time to plan your design. The trick is to draw your idea on graph paper first, before you begin to build. Then, you have to be patient while you're building. Stacking one brick on top of another is faster, but interlocking the bricks in a 'stairstep' pattern is much more stable and helps you build bigger models. But — most important of all — don't forget to use your imagination!"

Both Karsten and Francie agree that being a LEGO designer is a dream come true. And both of them got their jobs by being creative. "When I answered the help-wanted ad, I was given five pounds of bricks and told to just 'build something!'" says Karsten. Francie's first assignment was to build a round, rolling ball from square and rectangle LEGO pieces. "It took me all day," she explains, "and it was really a challenge!"

Francie and Karsten believe that if you can imagine something — no matter what it is — you can build it with LEGO bricks. And they're keeping busy, showing the world that anything's a "possi-build-ity"!

